438 A large-scale industry had developed. In place of the semi-handicraft workshops which predominated in the old days, large modern 433 factories arose. The timber industry was modernized and developed for increased production of prefabricated dwellings, paper, cardboard, matches, chemical products, and artificial silk. Industries, such as meat-packing, starch and treacle, distilling, dairy produce, tanning, and flax, were highly developed. The mineral resources of the country served as a basis for the building up of the pottery, glass, cement, and similar industries. The engineering plants in Byelorussia turned out machine tools, agricultural machinery and peat-cutting machinery. The extraction of peat was conducted on an extensive scale.

433 After the Revolution, agriculture in Byelorussia also underwent 241 a fundamental change. The individual peasants united in collective 474 farms (kolkhozes) in which they jointly cultivated the soil and had their co-operative dairy farms, piggeries, poultry runs, and beehives. They received substantial assistance from the state in the form of financial credits, tractors, harvester combines, and other agricultural machinery, seeds, equipment for draining marsh-lands, and innumerable other kinds of assistance. Under the Soviet system the cultivated areas of Byelorussia increased considerably, and in 1937 exceeded that of 1913 by 35 per cent.

Area and Population

Area

131 The present area of the Byelorussian Republic is about 228,300 square kilometres. Nearly half of this territory was added in September 1939 when, after the collapse of the Polish State, Western Byelorussia, which had been seized by Poland in 1920, was rejoined to the B.S.S.R. as part of the Soviet Union. The area of this region was 108,000 square kilometres, and the population, 4.8 millions. Of this added territory, 35.5 per cent. was classified as arable, 23.5 per cent. as forests, 24 per cent. as pastures and meadows, and 1.5 per cent. as gardens and orchards.

In August 1940 the area of Byelorussia decreased somewhat when parts of the Vileika and the Baranovichi provinces were transferred [728] from the B.S.S.R. to the Lithuanian Soviet Republic. Another small decrease occurred after the war in Europe had ended; in August 1945 a treaty was signed between Poland and the U.S.S.R., adjusting the Soviet-Polish frontier roughly along the "Curzon Line", with some deviations in Poland's favour. In consequence of this, Poland received a small strip of the territory which had been previously incorporated in the B.S.S.R., including the largest town of Western Byelorussia, Bialystok.

Population

162 At the census of January 1939 the population of the B.S.S.R. was 5,567,976 (an increase of 11.7 per cent. over December 1926, when the

3/2 [Between 1919 and 1941 -- Ann't]

III INDUSTRY

438 Before the Revolution, industry in Byelorussia was primitive, consisting mainly of small handicrafts, such as the making of homespun linen from locally produced flax, or the moulding of pottery by hand. Under the Soviet system, however, a fundamental reorganization took place in the whole U.S.S.R. Many areas whose natural resources had previously not been utilized now began to be more fully developed; modern methods of production were introduced throughout the Soviet Union; and as a result, the total industrial output increased about eightfold.

In Byelorussia, as well as in the other Soviet republics, many changes occurred. In place of the former handicraft shops, large modern factories arose, turning out increased amounts of textiles, lumber, paper, glass, bricks, pottery, and cement. The extraction of peat was carried out on a more extensive scale, and the processes mechanized. At the same time, the number of workers employed in industry increased rapidly.

Industrial Population

In 1925, three years before the first Five Year Plan was launched, the factories of Byelorussia were located mainly in Minsk, Vitebsk, Mogilev, Bobruisk, and Borisov. These five cities had a total of 16,000 factory workers employed for the most part in small shops (only three plants had more than 500 employees) and comprising three-quarters of the factory workers then in Byelorussia. The distribution of industry was as follows: textiles exclusively in Vitebsk; shoe and clothing factories in Vitebsk and Minsk; electrical in Minsk; metal-working in Minsk, Vitebsk, and Orsha; woodworking in Bobruisk, Borisov, and Mozyr.

By 1932, the end of the first Five Year Plan, there were altogether 52,000 industrial workers in the B.S.S.R., compared with 39,000 in 1926. Twenty-two thousand of these were employed in the clothing, knitted-goods, and shoe factories. The woodworking and wood chemical plants absorbed about 12,000; metalworking, 7,000; the food industry, 5,600; and peat plants, 4,400 workers. In another four years (1936) the number of workers employed in large industrial establishments had risen to a total of 155,200.

Growth of New Factories

Some of the largest industrial enterprises which were set up in the B.S.S.R. in the course of the pre-war Five Year Plans (1928-41) were as follows:

• 438 Minsk. Two large machine construction factories, "Kirov" and "Voroshilov"; the "Bolshevik" leather factory; the "Kaganovich" footwear factory; the "October" clothing factory; a peat plant, and a brick plant.

Mogilev. The "Dimitrov" machine construction factory; the "Kirov" motorcar repair works; the "Kuibyshev" silk factory; the "Stalin" leather factory; a pipe foundry, and a peat plant.

Vitebsk. The "Krasny Metallist" machine tools factory; the "Clara Zetkin" hosiery; the "KIM" hosiery and knitted fabrics factory, employing 10,000 workers; the "Kaganovich" flax mills, and many textile factories.

Gomel. The "Stalin" glass factory; the "Trud" footwear factory; the "Vesuvji" match factory, and a knitted fabrics factory.

[433] Industrial output in this city increased 100 times in comparison with production before 1914. In addition to the large factories listed above, a big machine building works, "Proletary", produced turning lathes; and another large plant "Kaganovich", was constructed to turn out agricultural machines. Gomel being a large railway junction, railway truck building works and railway engine repair works were also built there.

Other cities. In the small towns of Byelorussia, where before 1917 there were no industrial enterprises at all, a number of plants were developed; for example, in Bobruisk, large wood processing and clothing factories; in Krichov, a large cement factory; and in Orsha, a flax mill, meat cannery and brick works.

433 Altogether, in the course of the pre-war Five Year Plans, industrial output in the B.S.S.R. increased considerably. The following table, reckoned in terms of 1926-27 prices, compares production in 1937 with the level of output in 1932.

727 when visited by UNRRA Mission observers, Brest was found to be about 50 percent. destroyed, and with a population estimated at 35 to 40 thousand, making it no more than the sixth city in size in the B.S.S.R. Baranovichi, also visited by UNRRA observers in August 1946, was found half demolished and with a population of 20,000. The municipal economy had been so little developed in Baranovichi that the Oblast Soviet Chairman, speaking before the Byelorussian Supreme Soviet as a Deputy in September 1946, asked that five million roubles be allocated in the Five Year Plan for the construction of a water works and sewer system in the city.

438 185 During the Five Year Plan, 1946-50, considerable industrial expansion is planned for the western oblasts. If the Plan is fulfilled, they will contribute about one-fourth of the Republic's total industrial output in 1950.

Among the new industries scheduled for construction in the western areas is a sugar refinery of 6,000 tons annual capacity, to be located in the Grodno oblast. In the city of Grodno will be built a woollen cloth factory which, together with a new factory to be constructed in Minsk, will produce 1.6 million metres of woollens in 1950. At Lida in Baranovichi oblast is to be founded a rubber shoe-sole factory which by 1950 is to produce half the requirements of the B.S.S.R.'s shoe industry. A sheepskin overcoat factory is to be built at Pinsk. New bread factories are to be put in operation in Grodno, Brest, and Pinsk; a food concentrates plant will be built at Lida; and the meat-packing plant at Baranovichi is scheduled for restoration.

377 185 Electric power stations are to be restored in Grodno and Brest, while new ones will be built in Baranovichi, Lida, Pinsk, and Molodechno. Hydro-electric stations will be constructed also, among them a station on the Shar river at Slonim and a larger station of 7,000 kilowatts at the Vileia waterfall in Molodechno oblast. As has been stated earlier, electric power facilities are a major need in the western oblasts, which in 1938 supplied only 0.5 per cent. of the electricity in pre-war Poland.

508 Also to be built at Brest is one of the Republic's three largest airports; the other two to be in Gomel and Minsk.

German Destruction of Industry

727 The destruction of Byelorussian industry by the Germans during the war was savage, systematic, and complete. At the Minsk trial of war criminals in January 1946 it was charged that the Germans had demolished or transferred to Germany the buildings and equipment of 10,338 of the B.S.S.R.'s industrial enterprises. The methods employed for this destruction were identical throughout the Republic.

In Minsk, for example, the industrial enterprises had been turned over to four or five German firms (Borman, Schorowa Werk, Trebotz, Schlachthof, and Trol), which carried off to Germany or to German-occupied territories, all the equipment and machinery which was of any